

MORTIMER'S REPORT.

The Chamber of Commerce Dissects Its Falsehoods.

Cold Facts Quoted to Show the Vice Consul's Maliginity.

Her Gracious Majesty's Representative Put in a Big Hole.

It is Shown By Irrefragable Logic to Be Wrong From A to Izzard, With a Big Mass of Figures to Prove It.

Vice-Consul C. White Mortimer of this city, in a recent report to the English government, makes some statements which if true, would be damaging to this section, and which, if not contradicted, might be taken for true. The chamber of commerce took the matter in hand, and the following is the reply of the committee appointed for the purpose. It places Mr. Mortimer in a very unpleasant light in this community, and one would think it might call for some action on the part of his government.

WHEREAS: The attention of this body has recently been called to the British Foreign Office report of 1889, of the consular districts of Los Angeles and Wilmington, prepared by the British Vice-Consul, C. White Mortimer, stationed at this place; and

WHEREAS: Said report contains so many palpable errors, misrepresentations, false, inconsistent and contradictory statements and conclusions, detrimental to said district, and evidently made either through ignorance or prejudice; and

WHEREAS: This section has been similarly misrepresented in previous reports emanating from the same source; and

WHEREAS: This body feels, that in justice to our citizens, the public in general, and the true merits of this section, it cannot again permit these misrepresentations to go forth to the world uncontradicted; and

WHEREAS: Some of the statements and misrepresentations and their corrections are as follows, to wit:

On page 34 of the report occurs the following:

The assessed value of the city and county of Los Angeles was in 1888 21,500,000 lb (\$107,500,000). In 1889, 18,700,000 lb (\$93,500,000.)

The facts are: The assessed value of the city and county of Los Angeles was in 1888 18,400,000 lb (\$92,000,000). 1889, 18,729,217 lb (\$93,646,086.) an increase over 1888 of 329,217 lb (\$1,646,086.) and over 1887 (the boom year) of 1,240,632 lb or \$6,203,158.

On page 36 of the report occurs the following:

"Owing partly to the lack of harbor facilities, and partly to the fact that there is as yet nothing here for export by sea, the imports for Los Angeles are entered at San Diego, San Francisco, New Orleans and New York, and brought here by rail."

The facts, as per report of the collector of the Port of Wilmington (San Pedro) for the year December 1st, 1888, to December 1st, 1889, are:

Table with 2 columns: Item, Value. Includes Lumber, feet; Coal, tons; Merchandise, tons; Ties, (railroad) tons; Coke, tons; Caustic soda, tons; Live stock, head; Collections for year.

The following is a summary of import and export business transacted during the year 1889 up to December 24th, as shown by the books of the custom house and the Southern Pacific railroad company:

Table with 2 columns: Item, Value. Includes Laths; Shingles; Rock, tons; Coal, tons; Ties, number; Lumber, feet; Merchandise, tons.

Table with 2 columns: Item, Pounds. Includes Grain; Merchandise; Fruit; Canned goods; Honey; Lard; Beer; Tallow; Wool; Hay; Beans; Ropes; Wire; Brick; Lumber; Terra Cotta; Tea; Hides; Paper; Salt; Iron; Wine; Total in pounds.

Following is a report of the merchandise received at Redondo from June 6, 1889, to March 1, 1890:

Table with 2 columns: Item, Tons. Includes Inward pounds; Outward pounds.

Total 23,293,042 11,646

Notwithstanding the "lack of harbor facilities," there arrived at San Pedro during the same period of time, vessels as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Item, Arrivals. Includes Steamers number; Schooners; SHIBs; Barks; Barkentines; Brigs.

Total 613

And the following is a report of the business transacted at San Pedro by the Pacific Coast Steamship company from December 1, 1888, to December 1, 1889:

Table with 2 columns: Item, Value. Includes Freight landed at San Pedro; Freight taken from San Pedro; Passengers landed at San Pedro; Passengers taken from San Pedro; Passenger steamers going north; Passenger steamers going south; Freight steamers at San Pedro, trips.

At Redondo the California Steamship company's steamers made 22 voyages, 2,825 tons; the Pacific Steamship company's steamers made 87 voyages, 8,670 tons; J. G. North, Eclipse, and Edward Park, made 3 voyages (out), 151 tons. Total, tons, 11,646.

In the published report of the Los Angeles chamber of commerce, just issued, appears the following schedule of wages now in vogue:

The following rates are obtained from the leading employment agencies:

Housekeepers, per month, \$20.00 to \$35.00; girls (house servants), per month, \$15.00 to \$25.00; cooks (men and women), per month, \$20.00 to \$30.00; laborers, per day, \$1.50 to \$2.50; carpenters, per day, \$2.50 to \$3.00; plasterers, per day, \$3.50 to \$4.50; lathers, per day, \$3.50 to \$4.50; painters, per day, \$3.00 to \$4.00; harness makers, per day, \$3.00 to \$4.00; tinners and plumbers, per week, \$3.00 to \$25.00; bookkeepers, per month, \$50.00 to \$125.00; clerks (office), per month, \$35.00 to \$100.00; farm hands, per month, \$20.00 to \$30.00; butchers, per month, \$30.00 to \$80.00.

\$125.00; clerks (office), per month, \$35.00 to \$100.00; farm hands, per month, \$25.00 to \$35.00; bakers, per month, \$30.00 to \$80.00; butchers, per month, \$30.00 to \$80.00.

To which we respectfully call the attention of her Majesty's able representative. The statement that "thousands of good workmen are now out of employment" is totally without foundation and absolutely untrue. Not one of the different classes of laborers, now honestly seeking employment, is unable to find it, at the above schedule of wages.

On page 43 of the report (speaking of Catalina) occurs the following:

"The island, which is about nine miles long, and one third to one mile wide, was sold for 80,000 lbs, and may be worth that much apart from the ore."

The actual dimensions of the island are length twenty one miles, breadth about three miles (smallest) to eight miles (largest.)

On page 48, referring to the Beaumont colony lands, occurs the following:

"The best valuation I can give these lands is 6 lbs (\$30) per acre an adjoining proprietor offers his lands at 4 lbs (\$20) per acre."

This statement is certainly misleading, as outside lands with no water except by digging 70 to 120 feet for it, at 4lbs (\$20) per acre, does not compare in value with lands, supplied with plenty of good water, by an effective system of reservoirs and water pipes distributing it to the producer for domestic and irrigation purposes.

Dry lands without a supply of water for irrigation, at 4 lbs (\$20) per acre, may be higher priced, than the same quality of land supplied with water for domestic and irrigation purposes at 30 lbs. (\$150) per acre.

The foregoing attack on a personal enterprise would seem to be beneath the dignity of a fair minded British vice-consul.

On page 45 of the report occurs the following:

"Irishmen and Canadians succeed well here because they readily adapt themselves to the manners and customs of the people. Englishmen are more successful in thoroughly English colonies like British Columbia, and in view of the fact that the vast agricultural and mineral wealth of that colony is almost unexplored, and that the opportunities to make money are fully as good there as here, that the surroundings are more in harmony with English ideas and that Englishmen are likely to live happier and more useful lives there than here, I invariably advise my English correspondents to write to the commissioner of lands, Victoria, British Columbia, before deciding where they will settle."

While Englishmen as per the above are not as suitable to this country as to British Columbia, on account of lack of harmony existing between its surroundings and their ideas; and while their personal usefulness is a failure here as compared to the former country; still, evidently, their capital, handled by those not so sensitive to nor effected by this want of harmony between surroundings and ideas, meets with better success, as appears by the following, which occurs on page 43 of the report:

"For the past six years I have annually pointed out the remarkably good opening existing here for the investment of money on mortgage."

In view of the fact, which is well known, that the vice consul himself has for some years past been engaged in loaning British capital on mortgage security here, charging large commissions, the somewhat remarkable advice becomes significant.

On page 39 of the report occurs the following passage in the opinion of an "Irish gentleman," which is here quoted:

"I would not take a present of an orange grove near Los Angeles, or anywhere in the vicinity of the sea or where there is much fog, if the gift was coupled with the condition that I should work it."

Immediately following this opinion the vice consul says:

"The writer of the foregoing is a successful business man, in whose judgment and integrity I place implicit confidence."

In view of the fact that during the last season alone, upwards of 319 car loads, averaging 300 boxes to the car, of oranges were produced from the orchards in and "near" Los Angeles, it would seem either that the threatened refusal of the gentleman whose opinion is quoted, is based on the well founded and safe assumption that none such will be tendered him, or that the "implicit confidence" of her Majesty's representative has been misplaced or betrayed.

On pages 45 and 46 of the report occurs the following:

"It has been stated in the press here that poor laborers seeking employment are sometimes arrested as vagrants by the constables, solely to obtain the fee allowed for making their arrest, and are committed to the chain-gang. It was stated in the Los Angeles Daily Times a few weeks ago that twenty-two of the chain-gang refusing to work more than six hours a day were put in the dungeons; that they made a great deal of noise, and to quiet them the jailor turned the hose upon them; and that some of the worst continuing to howl, were taken out and hung up by their thumbs until they gave in, which was a very short time. Since writing the foregoing, the following item was published in one of the local papers:

"This thing of arresting an honest mechanic simply because he was out of work and sending him to jail as a vagrant, and because he refused to go out in chains to work on the highway, trice him up until his thumbs are pulled out of joint, must not only stop, but the cruelty committed must be atoned. Our people are worse than barbarians for tolerating such atrocities."

LUMBER VESSEL REPORT:

Table with 2 columns: Date, Vessel Name, Tons. Includes May 17, Steamer Jewell; June 8, Schooner Bertha Dolbeer; June 29, Schooner George C. Perkins; July 2, Steamer Protection; July 8, Schooner Bertha Dolbeer; July 24, Schooner John G. North; July 27, Steamer Protection; July 27, Schooner News Boy; Aug. 18, Steamer Neptune; Aug. 18, Steamer Protection; Sept. 7, Schooner Edw. Park; Sept. 15, Schooner John G. North; Sept. 29, Bark Tam O'Shanter; Oct. 12, Schooner Eclipse; Oct. 15, Steamer Bonita; Oct. 31, Schooner Bertha Dolbeer; Nov. 4, Schooner Esther Bultin; Nov. 18, Schooner John G. North; Feb., Steamer Point Loma.

Table with 2 columns: Item, Value. Includes 200 M 6-ft. laths; 6,425 posts.

Total, 19 vessels. Total, feet 6,009,915

Report of carloads from June 6, 1889, to March 1, 1890:

Table with 2 columns: Date, Cars. Includes June 89 cars going east; July 121 cars going east; Aug. 71 cars going east; Sept. 198 cars going east; Oct. 141 cars going east; Nov. 162 cars going east; Dec. 84 cars going east; Feb. 99 cars going east.

The eminent vice consul seems after all to be in doubt as to whether there is or is not anything for export here, for, notwithstanding the passage above quoted, the following appears on page 34 of the report:

"The chief exports are grain, wine and other fruits. I have no accurate statistics of the amount of grain produced in this district; the surplus for export was not large, and was shipped chiefly in coasting vessels from Hueneme, a port of delivery within the collection district of Wilmington."

The facts are that Hueneme is not a port of delivery, within the collection district of Wilmington, and but a very small quantity if any of the grain from this district, was delivered at that port; 185,567 bushels were however shipped from San Pedro alone during the year 1889.

"The amount of grain produced in this district (Los Angeles county alone) for 1889, was wheat, 2,000,000 bushels, barley about the same quantity, besides some rye, oats, and other grains. Of this amount we export by ship and rail in the vicinity of 399,449 bushels."

On page 40 of the report occurs the following:

"The vine disease, described in my last two reports, is still unchecked, and seriously menaces the existence of the viticultural industry in this immediate vicinity."

On page thirty-five of the report occurs the following:

"The depression in the wine trade continues. The bearing grape vines in Los Angeles county alone aggregate over 15,000 acres, and the yield over 85,000 tons per annum. The price for choice grapes is from \$10 to \$20 per ton, and for good wine in eastern markets from 80 cents to \$1.20 per gallon in bulk, and steadily increasing in value. The net profit of a vineyard that has received proper care, and is in full bearing, is at least \$60 to \$70 per acre; and what disease there was is rapidly disappearing."

On page thirty-six of the report occurs the following:

"It will be seen that the bay of San Pedro, where foreign going vessels anchor, is wholly unprotected from the south east gales. Occasionally vessels that anchor in the bay are driven ashore and wrecked."

The record: Such a thing as a south-east gale is, with few exceptions, almost unknown. The harbor is well protected from every other quarter. From and including the year 1886, to and including the year 1889, the following number of vessels, sail, steam, domestic and foreign, arrived and departed from San Pedro:

Table with 2 columns: Year, Number of Vessels. Includes 1886, 519; 1887, 835; 1888, 1273; 1889 (deducting those destined for Redondo only), 618.

Total 3245

Of that number but three were in any way injured on account of insufficient protection from the wind; all three were injured during one and the same blow, and the cause of their injuries was attributed as much to carelessness and want of foresight on the part of the officers of the vessels as to the storm. The wind at that point being generally so mild, and accidents on account of rough weather so extremely infrequent that the precautions ordinarily exercised at other ports are generally thought unnecessary there.

On page 41 of the report occurs the following:

"The following paragraph in my last report" (1888) is still correct: "For several years past mechanics have received from 16s. to 24s., (approximately \$4.00 to \$6.00) per day. In the past year wages have been reduced from 40 to 50 per cent., and thousands of good workmen are out of employment."

A reduction of from 40 to 50 per cent. on the above figures would make wages for mechanics, approximately, as follows: Reduced 40 per cent., from \$2.40 to \$3.60 per day; reduced 50 per cent., from \$2.00 to \$3.00 per day. In the published report of the Los Angeles board of trade, for the years 1887-8, appears the following schedule in regard to wages quoted at that time:

Table with 2 columns: Item, Wages. Includes Housekeepers, per month; Girls (house servants), per month; Cooks (men and women), per month; Laborers, per day; Carpenters, per day; Brick masons, per day; Plasterers, per day; Lathers, per day; Painters, per day; Tanners, per day; Tinners and plumbers, per day; Clerks (store), per week; Bookkeepers, per month; Clerks (office), per month; Sama hands, per month; Bakers, per month; Butchers, per month.

The following rates are obtained from the leading employment agency:

Table with 2 columns: Item, Rate. Includes Housekeepers, per month; Girls (house servants), per month; Cooks (men and women), per month; Laborers, per day; Carpenters, per day; Brick masons, per day; Plasterers, per day; Lathers, per day; Painters, per day; Tanners, per day; Tinners and plumbers, per day; Clerks (store), per week; Bookkeepers, per month; Clerks (office), per month; Sama hands, per month; Bakers, per month; Butchers, per month.

In reply to the above we have simply to say that if any instance has ever occurred here where an honest mechanic or poor laborer has either been arrested or committed to the chain-gang solely to obtain the fees allowed for making the arrest or simply because he is out of work, it has not come to our attention, and we have no doubt that if such an arrest should be made, not only would our proper courts promptly release the party thus injured, but would summarily punish any officer guilty of such a outrage.

The evident object of injecting such statements and misrepresentations as the above, as well as the divorce statistics next hereafter quoted, into a consular report, is to create the impression in the minds of Europeans that civilization and society in general here is most crude. We regret indeed that the eminent consul should have attempted to convey such an impression.

On page 34 of the report occurs the following:

"One hundred and seventy-two divorces were granted by the superior court in Los Angeles county during 1889, an increase of fifty-nine on the number granted in 1888. Although the activity of the divorce court is a sign of depression in business, I cannot say it is an infallible one, etc."

In what manner business should be materially affected by the activity of the divorce course is not pointed out, and so far we have been unable to ascertain; the depression thus caused, however, may have been somewhat relieved by virtue of the fact that 1,201 marriage licenses were issued by the clerk of the same court during the same period. Therefore,

Resolved, That we should have had just cause for complaint if the report had merely published injurious truths but had omitted beneficial truths, but

when in addition injurious falsifications have been published and this great mass of favorable facts been omitted, we call for redress by the removal of Vice Consul C. White Mortimer, or the substitution of some person as vice consul at this place who shall see and report the facts as they exist. Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions and statements be forwarded through the proper channel to the government of Great Britain, to the British minister at Washington, and to James G. Blaine, secretary of state.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT. San Bernardino Liquor Sellers and Their Cases.

Mr. G. Dorani, of San Bernardino, was tried in the United States district court yesterday on a charge of selling liquor to Indians. The testimony showed that the liquor had been sold according to the complaint, but the prosecution could not prove that the purchasers were Indians technically; that is, within the jurisdiction of an Indian agent. Judge Ross accordingly instructed the jury to acquit.

Mr. Johnson of San Bernardino, charged with the same offense who was convicted some days ago, was sentenced yesterday to two months imprisonment.

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